



*Development of Job Rotation Model for Performance
Improvement of Employees of East Java I Regional Office of
Directorate General of Customs and Excise*

**Pengembangan Model Mutasi Pegawai untuk Peningkatan
Kinerja Pegawai pada Kantor Wilayah Direktorat Jenderal
Bea dan Cukai Jawa Timur I**

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Abstract

Job rotation in public service agencies is a common practice. Job rotations are implemented in order for employees to gain new experience, learn new things that can ultimately improve the skills, competencies and performance that are beneficial for the organization. The Directorate General of Customs and Excise (DJBC) of Republic of Indonesia applies the homebase (within the city of residence) and non-homebase (far from the city of residence) job rotation models in an effort to improve employee experience, skills, competencies and performance and meet the organization's specific goals. This study aimed to identify the degree of engagement and performance of DJBC East Java I Regional Office employees who have experienced both homebase and non-homebase job rotation models. The study used qualitative methods with a number of informants selected purposively based on their age range and homebase and non-homebase job rotation experience. The results showed that non-homebase job rotation that was originally intended to provide employees with experience, knowledge, skills and improvement is not accompanied with strong employee engagement nor a high degree of work performance. Personal and family problems, unexpected financial expenditure and the process of adaptation in the new workplace have prevented the non-homebase employees from developing optimum engagement and job performance.

Keywords: homebase job rotation, non-homebase job rotation, work engagement, job performance

Abstrak

Mutasi di kalangan instansi pelayanan publik merupakan praktek yang lazim. Mutasi dijalankan agar pegawai mendapatkan pengalaman baru, mempelajari hal baru yang pada akhirnya bisa meningkatkan ketrampilan, kompetensi dan kinerja yang berguna bagi organisasinya. Direktorat Jenderal Bea dan Cukai (DJBC) Republik Indonesia menerapkan model mutasi homebase (di kota tempat tinggal) dan mutasi non-homebase (jauh dari kota tempat tinggal) sebagai upaya meningkatkan pengalaman, ketrampilan, kompetensi dan kinerja pegawai dan memenuhi tujuan-tujuan tertentu dari organisasi. Penelitian ini ditujukan untuk mengidentifikasi derajat engagement dan kinerja pegawai DJBC Kanwil Jawa Timur I yang sudah mengalami model mutasi homebase dan non-homebase. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif atas sejumlah informan yang dipilih berdasarkan secara purposive dengan rentang usia dan pengalaman mutasi homebase dan non-homebase. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mutasi non-homebase yang sedianya dimaksudkan untuk memberi pengalaman, pengetahuan, ketrampilan dan peningkatan ternyata tidak menimbulkan engagement yang kuat dan tidak pula menunjukkan derajat kerja yang tinggi. Persoalan-persoalan pribadi dan keluarga, pengeluaran finansial tak terduga dan proses adaptasi di tempat kerja baru membuat engagement dan kinerja pegawai di non-homebase tidak optimal.

Kata kunci: mutasi homebase, mutasi non-homebase, work engagement, kinerja

I. Introduction

Employee rotation is a common practice in an organization and is part of human resource management. Priansa (2014) defined employee rotation as the activity of assigning employees from their current work to another work within the organization.¹ Employee rotation also includes labor transfer, handover of responsibilities, transfer of employment status, and the like.

Employee rotation are sometimes also interpreted as job rotation, which is an employment activity related to the process of transferring functions, responsibilities and employment status to a certain status with the aim that the workforce concerned receives deep job satisfaction and is able to show maximum performance to the organization (Handoko, 2014).²

Heathfield (2019) argued that employee rotation or job rotation is an approach to help employees develop career paths.³ Employee rotations give employees work

¹ Priansa, D. J. (2014). *Perencanaan dan pengembangan SDM*. Alfabeta.

² Handoko, H. (2014). *Manajemen Personalia dan Sumber Daya Manusia*. BPFE.

³ Heathfield, S. (2019). *A Transfer at Work Is a Career Opportunity*. The Balance Career. <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/transfer-at-work-is-a-career-opportunity-1918276>

experience in other fields within the same department or in other departments in the same field of work. Thus, still according to Heathfield (2019) employee rotation or job rotation is one way to help employees gain more minutes and more extensive experience in related departments and businesses.⁴ Further, he believed that employee rotations or job transfers provide career paths for employees when promotions are not yet available, because with rotations, employees can: (a) acquire new knowledge and skills by developing different jobs with new responsibilities that require different skills; (b) overcome boredom and dissatisfaction with his current job by carrying out new and different jobs with different tasks and responsibilities, (c) getting opportunities for challenges to develop achievements and achievements and potentially giving different aspects to the workplace and organization, (d) gain experience from changes in the work environment that require employees to adapt and learn to manage these changes, which in turn will increase the ability of employees to deal with various uncertainties; (e) learn about various components, activities and jobs within the organization, and learn about how a job can be completed in different departments or work functions, which in turn can build organizational knowledge and abilities in carrying out work that enhances company values; (f) gain experience with coworkers and new managers who can ultimately provide potential opportunities, and (g) develop without leaving the company and thus be able to maintain the amount of salary, benefits and other company benefits.

Governmental organizations in Indonesia also implement employee rotation or job rotation as part of employee management. The legal protection for the central and regional governments to apply employee management policy, particularly in terms of rotation for ASN (Civil Servants), is Civil Servants (ASN) Law No. 5 of 2014, supported by Government Regulations (PP) No. 11 of 2017 concerning Management of Civil Servants which is technically outlined in BKN (State Civil Service Agency) Regulation No. 5 of 2019 concerning Procedure for Implementing Employee Rotation. This regulation stipulates that ASN rotation within government

⁴ Ibid

institutions must be conducted through ASN rotation planning at respective environment, with regards to the aspects of (a) competencies, (b) career patterns, (c) employee mapping, (d) talent pool, (e) career transfer and development, (f) work/performance appraisal and work behavior, (g) organizational needs, and (h) the nature of work technical or policy depending on the classification of positions.

Employee or job rotation (hereinafter referred to as rotation) at the East Java I Regional Office of the Directorate General of Customs and Excise (Kanwil DJBC) is appealing to observe. In the DJBC environment, the decision for employee rotation, transfer, or job rotation is entirely the authority of the Directorate General of Customs and Excise (DJBC), Ministry of Finance, Republic of Indonesia. In one year, excluding placement of prospective Civil Servants, an average of 1,500 employees at DJBC are rotated or transferred to another office or another type of job within the DJBC environment. Employees can be rotated to DJBC offices located in the same city or different city or region far away from the employee's and their family's domicile. Rotations in the city or close to the city of origin are called 'homebase rotation', while rotations to cities that are far from the city of origin are called 'non-homebase rotation'.

Both homebase and non-homebase rotations are intended to improve performance. Employee performance is defined as what is done and not done by an employee. It concerns the quantity and quality of output, attendance at work, an accommodating and ready-to-help attitude and timeliness of work performance (Shahzadi et. al., 2014).⁵ Mathis and Jackson (2010:342) established employee performance criteria as follows: (a) quantity of output, (b) quality of output, (c) timeliness of output, (d) attendance at work, (e) efficiency of work results, and (f) effectiveness of work results.⁶

Employee rotation is interesting to study from the aspect of *employee engagement* among employees affected by non-home base job rotation. This is an

⁵ Shahzadi, I., Javed, A., Pirzada, S. S., Nasreen, S., & Khanam, F. (2014). Impact of employee motivation on employee performance. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 6(23), 159–166.

⁶ Mathis, R., & Jackson, J. (2010). *Human Resource Management*. South-Western Cengage Learning.

interesting phenomenon to be discussed as object of study since basically, the decreased performance and engagement is contrary to the positive ideas and hopes of human resource development through job rotation. Engagement in this context refers to the seriousness, sincerity to work, and the bond and commitment to the organization. The concept of engagement was first proposed by William A. Kahn (1990), which he called *personal engagement*. It means the positive strength that motivates and establishes emotional, cognitive, and physical bond between employees and organization.⁷ Employees who are *engaged* (involved, committed, participatory, dedicated) are individuals who do real actions to improve business outputs for their organization, stay in the organization, are committed, dedicated, who speak positively about the organization, and strive to work and achieve beyond the expectations with extraordinary performance. Meanwhile, employees with decreased *engagement* show lack of real actions to support their organization's performance, run out of spirit to stay in the organization, lack commitment, lack dedication, and do not work beyond expectation.

This study aims to learn the employee rotation development model for the improvement of DJBC's performance, and to learn the difference in work performance and engagement between employees with home-base rotation and employees with non-home base rotation.

II. Research Method

This paper used qualitative method with the purpose of obtaining more complete, comprehensive, and representative data and information on various facts of homebase and non-homebase rotation and finding its relation with employee's performance and engagement. Informants in this research were selected through purposive sampling. A total of 12 selected informants are employees of East Java I Regional Office of DJBC ranging in age who all have experienced more than two rotations and experienced both homebase and non-homebase rotations.

⁷ Kahn, W. A. (1990). Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. *Academy of Management Journal*, 33(4), 692–724.

Data were collected in two ways, namely (a) primary data obtained from semi-structured in-depth interview with informants. This interview model is an in-depth interview with guidelines to gain comprehensive information in a more flexible-but-focused way in order to explore the aspects of homebase and non-homebase mutation, as well as its relation with employee's performance and engagement; and (b) observation by watching employee's working activities. Interviews and observation were also supported by (c) collection of secondary data in a form of supporting documents. To keep informants' privacy, their names and names of some places or positions are disguised.

III. Findings and Discussion

1. Information on the Informants

The following Table shows details on this research's informants.

Table 1
Information on the Informants

No	Inf.	Age	Sex	Marital Status	Duration of service (year)	Rotation (times)	Current Rotation Status
1.	A	43	Male	Married	19	8	Homebase
2.	B	45	Male	Married	25	7	Homebase
3.	C	40	Male	Married	17	6	Non-homebase
4.	D	40	Male	Married	19	7	Homebase
5.	E	25	Male	Married	5	3	Homebase
6.	F	23	Male	Single	4	2	Non-homebase
7.	G	42	Male	Married	20	8	Homebase
8.	H	50	Male	Married	27	11	Homebase
9.	I	42	Male	Married	20	11	Homebase
10.	J	43	Male	Married	23	9	Homebase
11.	K	40	Male	Married	20	7	Homebase
12.	L	49	Female	Married	28	7	Homebase

Source : Interview

11 out of 12 informants are male while the remaining one is female. Informants' age ranges from 23 to 50 years old. 11 informants are married, one is single. Their duration of service ranges from for to 28 years. All of the 12 informants have been rotated between two to 11 times and all have experienced homebase and non-homebase rotations. At the time of interview, 10 out of 12

informants are in homebase rotation assignment and the remaining two are in non-homebase rotation.

2. *Perception on homebase rotation and non-homebase rotation*

Homebase rotation and non-homebase rotation are perceived and interpreted differently by employees. Perceptions of these rotations are described in (a) employee preferences for homebase and non-homebase rotations, (b) opinions that rotations provide experience and competency development, (c) non-homebase rotations as a form of punishment, and (d) non-homebase rotations cause various social and psychological problems.

2.1. *Preference for homebase rotation and non-homebase rotation*

Almost all informants stated that they preferred rotations in homebase locations or were transferred back to homebase. This is because rotations to non-homebase locations lead to complicated consequences: separation from family (if they do not bring the family to move to a new location), additional financial expenses for transportation or rental fees, the process of adjusting to the new work environment, and various other aspects as conveyed by the following informants:

“In terms of comfort and inner peace, I choose to work in a location close to my family. As the head of the family, I am expected to take action if there are family matters that cannot be handled by my wife or child. We can also monitor the family...”

(Informant C)

“Non-homebase rotation more or less will make a deficit in terms of financial income. If we miss the family, or there’s a family problem that requires us to come home, we must pay for the return flight. Ship takes too long, Makassar – Surabaya will take a whole day and night. Surabaya to Ambon takes three days. I can’t imagine a co-worker at non-homebase rotation in Merauke who has to visit family in Medan, the multiple layoffs. Tens of millions rupiah for travelling expenses that”

(Informant J)

“Adaptation with local culture is a big challenge. Take example of me with Javanese culture, who is assigned in city A in the eastern Indonesia with typically harsh people who have the habit of taking alcoholic drink in every gathering. If we can’t adapt to that, we can be stressed”

(Informant E)

Common issues that usually arise with non-homebase rotations like these are also found with some studies. Ofner (1987) as quoted by Kaymaz (2010) stated that if rotation involves geographical changes, employees and families must move together, adapt to the new environment, find work for couples, find schools for children, and so on.⁸ The study of the discomfort of non-homebase rotations has also been submitted by Morris (1956) as quoted by Kaymaz (2010) which stated that geographical changes that affect social conditions and employee's lives can also trigger stress, disrupt social life, and reduce motivation.⁹

2.2. Non-homebase rotations as experience and competency development

Rotations can also be seen as a way to develop employee experience, skills and competencies. Non-homebase rotations are considered to have certain goals, including as a chance for employees to learn new things outside of their habits. New experiences and skills can come from different jobs or areas that have certain characteristics, including the cultural characteristics of colleagues in new workplaces.

“Yes, each office is unique. Certain office like in Dumai focuses on palm oil export. Being assigned here gave me the insights that I couldn't get from other offices. So is Jayapura, with its national border issues, so there are border cross posts. It gave me new experience. So bottom line, different office gives different kinds of experience and scope. It's the benefit of non-homebase rotation”

(Informant C)

Rotation as a way of developing employee skills is confirmed by many scientists. Ho et al. (2009, p. 118) even refer to rotation as an on-the-job training technique that supports the learning process through experience.¹⁰

⁸ Kaymaz, K. (2010). The effects of job rotation practices on motivation: A research on managers in the automotive organizations. *Business and Economics Research Journal*, 1(3), 69–85.

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Ho, W.-H., Chang, C. S., Shih, Y.-L., & Liang, R.-D. (2009). Effects of job rotation and role stress among nurses on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. *BMC Health Services Research*, 9(1), 117–127. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1472-6963-9-8>

Kaymaz (2010) cited Bennet (2003) and Eguchi (2005) who suggested that employees who work in more than one department or section with a certain time interval and with the process of learning through experience will more easily obtain the skills and knowledge needed by the organization. In terms of understanding the overall work process of an organization, Kaymaz (2010) argued that rotation allows all aspects of organizational learning to occur, all of its products, all of its services; and that is why employees have the opportunity to see how their department's efforts and the quality of their work affect the department or other processes in the organization.¹¹

2.3. *Non-homebase rotations as punishment*

Rotations to non-homebase, for employees, can be one form of punishment for administrative errors of employees, for example because they are suspected of accepting extortion or corruption. Rotation to non-homebase areas are often seen as unpleasant and embarrassing, even though those who are transferred to non-homebases do not make any mistakes, as stated by the following informants:

“If non-homebase rotations are along with promotion, we would not have the feeling of being punished or exiled. But if the rotation is in the same level, that is where we usually feel underappreciated by the organization, maybe also under punishment”

(Informant J)

That the non-homebase mutation is one form of punishment is confirmed by many researchers. Looking at it from the perspective of a government organization, Sarkar (2019) argued that job transfers are a huge matter for governments and their employees, a source of constant worry for employees and apparent satisfaction for governments.¹² Another reason is that governments tend to wield the matter of transfer cynically, as a tool for

¹¹ Kaymaz, K. (2010). The effects of job rotation practices on motivation: A research on managers in the automotive organizations. *Business and Economics Research Journal*, 1(3), 69–85.

¹²Sarkar, D. D. (2019). *How governments use job transfers to punish*. Livemint. <https://www.livemint.com/opinion/columns/opinion-how-governments-use-job-transfers-to-punish-1548339951674.html>

punishment, applying an element of unpredictability into an official's career. And this in turn means that a government official can spend their entire career with this question: where will I be next?

2.4. *Social, psychological, and cultural problems*

Non-homebase rotations cause various social and psychological problems, especially for employees who do not bring their families with them. Guilt for the family for leaving the family, being away from family and longing for the family is the most prominent thing as conveyed by the following informants:

“If I may share, there are a few stories of my friends being uncomfortable with non-homebase rotations. They got stressed; there was one who intended to end their lives by jumping from their house's second floor, another pretended to have amnesia so they are returned to their origins. There were also those who were romantically involved with a third party in the new place, which ended up ruining their family. These are the visible psychological aspects”

(Informant A)

“The whole thing is about adapting to a new environment, which not all people can do. Husband and wife who lived apart, for example, always fought via phone, which almost brought them to divorce. One in Ambon got stressed and was returned, one was absent from work for quite a long time, the list goes on. Only those who can manage their psychological conditions will survive in non-homebase.”

(Informant C)

Problems arising from non-homebase rotations are prevalent. Moving to a new location needs various preparations and activities that drain energy. Hyman et al. (2004) based on his empirical research in UK found that interventions of work demands into personal life resulted in high stress and emotional exhaustion among the employees.¹³ Anderson & Stark (1988) offers interesting review on such condition using studies on employee's psycho-social aspect, namely a profile of stress syndrome called 'mobility syndrome' which includes depression, deterioration of

¹³ Hyman, J., & Summers, J. (2004). Lacking balance? Work-life employment practices in the modern economy. *Personnel Review*, 33, 418–429.

health, little community involvement, strong dependency on marital relationship for emotional satisfaction, pervasive feelings of social anonymity, diffusion of individual responsibility, and high divorce rate.¹⁴

3. *Rotation and Engagement*

Findings and discussion of employee mutations and engagement are presented in aspects of (a) attitudes towards work, (b) readiness to make time for work, (c) understanding of the organization's business context, (d) relationships with coworkers to improve organizational performance, (e) motivation, and (f) transactional engagement.

3.1. *Attitude towards work*

Employees' attitude towards work and work processes when in homebase or non-homebase areas are interesting to put forward. The results of the study imply that less positive attitudes towards work are more indicated by employees working in non-homebase areas, as explained by the following informants:

“Working in non-homebase brings up some things that make us uncomfortable. The feelings are there since the beginning. That’s why I always hope to be rotated homebase. I promise to do anything if I was transferred to homebase”

(Informant C)

“When I was assigned in city P in Java, my work was mostly of services. When I was transferred to city N in Kalimantan, my work was more of supervision. It was exhausting since there were so many spots to monitor. In services work we can still take a break because it’s not a field work. Supervision work in homebase, that’s okay, since we can still meet our family to refresh our minds”

(Informant F)

Works in the non-homebase rotation area that are interpreted in such a way clearly illustrate the low level of engagement because this attitude is

¹⁴ Anderson, C., & Stark, C. (1988). Psychosocial Problems of Job Relocation: Preventive Roles in Industry. *Social Work, 33*(1), 38–41. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23715124>

contrary to the determinants of engagement as proposed by Anitha (2014) regarding work environments that are far from the home town. Anitha stated that work environment was one of the significant factors that determine the engagement level of an employee. She then concluded that a meaningful workplace environment that helps employee for focused work and interpersonal harmony is considered to be a key determinant of employee engagement.¹⁵

3.2. *Readiness to make time for work*

The results of interviews in this study highlight the fact that between homebase and non-homebase employees there are differences in readiness to spend energy and time for work. Employees who work at homebase feel able to fully devote their time and energy to work, while non-homebase employees consider several other things, as explained by the following informants:

“Although actually carrying out tasks is the duty of every employee, we still hold something back in our heart. For example, I have experienced rotation away from my family, I already knew how it feels to be far from my family; so if I was given a promotion offer but had to be transferred to non-homebase, I definitely wouldn't take it”
(*Informant L*)

“Working in non-homebase and far away from the family will make us think about time all the time, it drains most of our time; thinking of how to get cheap plane tickets to go home. That's why, when rotated to non-homebase, the first three or four months are usually rough; there's resistance since we left feeling difficult and forced. Work passion wears off and it ends up in our lack of readiness to make time and energy for work”
(*Informant G*)

Fading motivation and job satisfaction due to non-homebase assignments is revealed by the low availability of time to really focus on work. This is supported by the results of a study conducted by Linge

¹⁵ Anitha, J. (2014). Determinants of employee engagement and their impact on employee performance. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 63(3), 308–323

(2019).¹⁶ Linge argued that some of the problems of job rotation are adverse effect employees' job satisfaction and motivation due to difficulty in developing functional specialties.¹⁷ This may happen when the affected employees do not spend enough time in one position to get challenging assignments.

3.3. Understanding of the organization's business context

The business context of the organization as a government institution in the financial sector is as an institution ready to provide services to the public in the field of customs and excise, and as an institution in the field of state revenue. Informants who have served as staff in the field of rotation regulation conveyed as follows:

“Our institution has achievement targets for state revenue, for the protection of society and for boosting the country's economy. Our territory is a national territory and must have the same system nationally. Rotation is one way of leveling the system. So all prospective employees who want to serve Customs and Excise are chosen selectively and must follow programs such as CBP, Customs Boarding Program. This program is intended to explain to newcomers about our organization, so that employees know what to do, know where to be assigned. The non-homebase rotation is not a matter of labor absorption, but a matter of adjustment to the business context as a national government agency”
(Informant D)

Based on interviews with employees' understanding of the organization's business context, a number of employees turned out to be 'less able to understand' the organization's business context, especially when they had to be transferred to non-homebases, as stated by the following informants:

“I sometimes think non-homebase rotations are inhuman. Employees are like a ball passed from one place to another, sometimes with no clear period of assignment, sometimes assigned to an office where one job is handled by 7 people while 2 is actually enough, making it inefficient. Non-homebase rotations sometimes also reduce our motivation and open doors for social

¹⁶ Linge, T. K. (2019). Job Rotation And Employee Motivation: A Case Of Small ICT Firms In Nairobi Kenya. *Journal of Language, Technology & Entrepreneurship in Africa*, 10(1), 133–138.

¹⁷ Ibid

and psychological problems. Rotations to faraway locations are also a waste of state budget. There should be a more efficient rotation system, such as improving HR capacity in offices far from the capital, so there is no need to assign employees from big cities”

(*Informant A*)

Reduced understanding of the organization's business context may not be realized by employees who experience non-homebase mutations. This condition refers to the decreasing degree of job embeddedness. Karatepe (2013), quoting Mitchell et al. (2001) had the view that job embeddedness comes in three dimensions, namely: links, fit and sacrifice. Links are defined as “formal and informal connections between a person and institutions or other people”, while fit refers to “an employee’s perceived compatibility or comfort with an organization and with his or her environment”, and sacrifice which refers to “the perceived cost of material or psychological benefits that may be forfeited by leaving a job”.¹⁸

3.4. Relationships with coworkers to improve organizational performance

In non-homebase areas, peers or coworkers cannot always foster engagement or even hinder the construction of work engagement. This could be due to different cultural backgrounds, different experiences and different interests. Relationships with colleagues in non-homebase areas are very important to form work engagement, as conveyed by the following informants:

“When I was about to start working in a non-homebase location, I had doubts whether I would get coworkers who support one another. It turns out that coworkers, especially fellow rotation buddies, are very supportive, we complete each other. In city A, for example, work pressure in the area is very high. It’s a cross-border city, prone to smuggling, prone to clashes with local residents. Coworkers who are local people can help solve problems like this. We support each other for the benefit of work. I can’t imagine how stressful it would be if surrounded by new friends who could not support each other”

¹⁸ Karatepe, O. M. (2013). High-performance work practices, work social support and their effects on job embeddedness and turnover intentions. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 25(6).

(Informant E)

Relationship with co-workers has been widely discussed in various studies and justified as one of the factors that form engagement. Anitha (2014) believed that team and co-worker relationship builds another aspect that explicitly emphasizes the interpersonal harmony aspect of employee engagement.¹⁹ This is also supported by Khan (1990) who believed that supportive and trusting interpersonal relationships, along with supportive teams, promote employee engagement. Khan (1990) conveyed his thought that an open and supportive environment is essential for employees to feel safe in workplace and engage totally with their responsibility; that was because supportive environments allow members to experiment and try new things and even fail without fear of the consequences.

3.5. *Motivation*

Rotation, which requires employees to get out of their comfort zone and deal with new challenges outside the comfort zone, can undermine employee morale and motivation. Transfers to non-homebase areas are often characterized by demotivation, decreased motivation, feeling lazy, lack of passion and enthusiasm for work that is triggered by various aspects, as experienced by the following informants:

“When we work in non-homebase, motivation can go high and low; sometimes high, sometimes low. For me, it’s because I miss family; feeling homesick and want to come home to see them. Motivation then can be restored after a call or video call with wife or children. So, motivation of working non-homebase is different from working homebase. I can’t say how much it goes down, but it’s clear that working non-homebase results in less motivation than working homebase.

(Informant G)

¹⁹ Anitha, J. (2014). Determinants of employee engagement and their impact on employee performance. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 63(3), 308–323

Unstable motivation of employees working in non-homebase can be well understood. Hitt, Esser and Marriot (2002) in Linge (2019) stated that motivation can be extrinsic or intrinsic. Extrinsic motivation is driven by external factors like punishments and rewards which can make an employee act toward the attainment of work related tasks. Intrinsic motivation comes from within the employee. Those who are in non-homebase rotation and with low motivation have been affected by the fact they are away from their family; which is intrinsic in nature. They are not affected by the extrinsic. Linge also highlighted that some of job rotation problems include adverse employees' job satisfaction and motivation due to difficulty in developing functional specialties. This may happen when such employees have not spent enough time in one position to get challenging assignments.²⁰

3.6. *Transactional Engagement*

Work engagement among employees cannot just happen. There are always certain processes and 'conditions'. Issues regarding employee engagement are well thought out and considered by those who design these rotation patterns. The implementation of homebase and non-homebase rotation models at the Directorate General of Customs and Excise (DJBC) is done precisely to 'train, educate or familiarize' employees in order to achieve high levels of engagement wherever they are assigned, as stated by the informant who happened to have served as a staff in the field of HR planning, as follows:

“Work engagement is a condition in which an individual or employee feels like fulfilling a calling, sees themselves as important, feels they can develop their potential, explore and give what they have to contribute to the institution. So engagement refers to how much we love our institution. Engagement must be seen in a broad context, not only in terms of the inconvenience of rotation. If an employee does have a calling and loves their organization, they have a great vision for the organization, so that when they

²⁰ Linge, T. K. (2019). Job Rotation And Employee Motivation: A Case Of Small ICT Firms In Nairobi Kenya. *Journal of Language, Technology & Entrepreneurship in Africa*, 10(1), 133–138.

are assigned to an office far from homebase, they will consider the assignment as a challenge, as a space for growth, to exploit and explore their abilities”

(Informant D)

Although engagement is understood by employees as a condition that must be unconditionally poured out on the organization, employees still feel that the level of engagement is also determined by many factors, as stated by the following informants:

“In order to keep our motivation during working non-homebase, there must be a way so we can often meet with family. We should be able to schedule our coming home, surely with the knowledge of the leader. We can also take turns to come home since in non-homebase, there are usually too many people for one job, like four employees doing a two-man job. Also, there should be special benefit, overcharged benefits with significant amount”

(Informant B)

“Non-homebase rotations can sometimes come with undefined duration. There’s two and a half years, and there’s also six years. It leads to drained motivation, which makes it too uncomfortable. Those who can’t handle it will even ask to leave and go back to homebase, and some choose to quit DJBC. This is because the organization does not give what seems to be fair”

(Informant C)

From the interviews with the informants above, it appears that the engagement of employees working in non-homebase cannot be expected as an engagement that brings positive value to the organization. Employee engagement turns out to be 'in gradation' by 'proposing conditions' such as: being able to meet with family as often as possible, having additional living allowances, or even being willing to lose positions in non-homebase locations that are less comfortable for them. These conditions of conditional engagement are what Informant D refers to as 'transactional engagement'.

Interview results with the infomants mostly indicate that the so called ‘engagement transaksional’ demonstrated by the employee relates to one of determinants of employee engagement suggested by Anitha (2014) organisational policies, procedures, structures and systems. Anitha (2014)

argued that there is evidence from previous research that amiable organisational policies and procedures are very important for employee engagement and the eventual achievements of the business goals.²¹ In support to that notion, Richman et al. (2008) argued that organisation flexible work-life policies have a notable positive impact on employee engagement.²² The employees in this study have found it difficult to demonstrate the expected engagement due to conditions defined previously by Anitha (2014) and Richman et al. (2008)

4. *Rotation and Performance*

The aspect of performance in this study resulted in findings related to: (a) quantity and quality of the output, (b) attendance at work, and (c) work effectiveness and efficiency.

4.1. *Quantity and quality of the output*

This study seeks to find out how performance occurs at the level of non-homebase and homebase rotations. Employees working on homebase and non-homebase share a perspective on the quality and quantity of their output in terms of performance, as stated by the following informants:

“Basically, I always try to achieve the best quality and quantity of work output by trying my best. But once I worked in non-homebase, I was surprised my performance declined. Here, for example, at the beginning of coming to work in a non-homebase, I can even 'take it all' for one month without a day off. But after two or three years, I feel more and more lazy, so I don't know whether my performance has improved, remained or decreased”

(Informant E)

“For me personally, my performance while in non-homebase tends to decrease. It took me a long time to adapt to the new office, with the people, and it had an adverse effect. At this point there is actually a lot of work that can be done better by local employees in the non-homebase because they know better and are more familiar with the local situation. For example, when having to take action, local employees can handle it because they are

²¹ Anitha, J. (2014). Determinants of employee engagement and their impact on employee performance. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 63(3), 308–323

²² Richman, A. L., Civian, J. T., Shannon, L. L., Jeffrey Hill, E., & Brennan, R. T. (2008). The relationship of perceived flexibility, supportive work-life policies, and use of formal flexible

familiar with the communication style and local cultural approach. For the like of us who are new to non-homebase, this is a challenge that we cannot immediately embrace. It requires an adaptation process, which in turn lowers the quality and quantity of our output”

(Informant A)

Full performance does not seem to be attainable by employees in non-homebase assignment. Performance, as defined by Werther and Davis (1996), is the level of achievement of tasks that can be achieved by a person using the existing capabilities and limitations that have been set to achieve goals.²³ That employees have the tendency to always improve their performance is supported by Katzell and Thompson (1990) quoted by Swanson

dan Holton III (2009) who said that individuals build self-esteem by achieving the challenge-packed targets.²⁴ Swanson and Holton (2009) also cited Hackman and Oldham (1980) saying that work experience responsibility over the work result are two psychological conditions people look for. Furthermore, Swanson and Holton (2009:154) also mentioned that performance helps individuals to achieve key targets.²⁵ Career advancement and career opportunities in the organization as well as rewards with intrinsic and extrinsic values could be attained with performance.

4.2. Attendance at work

Attendance at work within the timeframe as required by the organization is a way of measuring individual performance. This aspect is presented by homebase and non-homebase employees in different ways. Office hours have been set, from 07.30 to 17:00 local time, with workdays between Monday to Friday, and off-days during Saturdays, Sundays and

²³ Werther, J., & Davis, K. (1996). *Human Resources and Personnel Management* (5th ed.). McGraw-Hill.

²⁴ Swanson, R. A., & Holton III, E. F. (2009). *Foundations of Human Resource Development* (2nd ed.). Berret-Kohler Publishers, Inc.

²⁵ Ibid

national holiday. However, it was acknowledged by a number of informants that at non-homebase, attendance at work became somehow ‘negotiable’, as acknowledged by the following informants:

“The most prominent aspect of non-homebase work that does not bring along family is homesickness. Before leaving for non-homebase location, my wife cried, feeling sad because she had to be left behind; and I once thought about resigning. Missing family usually makes us less disciplined related to attendance at work. I have experienced this before. When I was rotated non-homebase in Bali, I used to go back to Surabaya on Friday afternoon and only returned to Denpasar on Monday afternoon. I did it every week. When in Ambon, I returned to Surabaya every month. Because of the long distance and expensive plane costs, my family and I could get together for up to a week. So three weeks for working, and a week for family get together in your hometown...”

(Informant A)

“When it comes to homebase, it seems like attendance at work is always maintained. Even when my home was in Semarang and had a non-homebase in Jakarta, I can come home on Friday and return to the office, by train. But if the non-homebase place is far away, and out of island, the cost is way higher; then maybe the presence at work can be disrupted because it is not a well-spent holiday if the family gathering is only for a short time. The journey is far and costly.”

(Informant L)

Low level of attendance at work is an indication of low performance which is often related to the decline of job satisfaction. As Hoppock (1935), as quoted by Das and Baruah (2013), said that job satisfaction is any combination of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances, which cause a person truthfully, satisfied with his/her job. This is supported by what Locke (1976) in Das dan Baruah (2013) argued that job satisfaction as “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experience.” Non-attendance at work is clearly stated by Murray (1999) in Das and Baruah (2013) that job satisfaction has direct effect on level of absenteeism, commitment, performance and productivity.

IV. Conclusion

Non-homebase job rotation model at DJBC is originally intended to provide employees (public servants) with new knowledge, experience in order to improve organizational performance. In practice, non-homebase job rotation is not perceived in a positive and favourable way as it often requires employees to move to a place geographically far away from their hometown or the city that their family live. This implies to the possibility that the affected employee takes their family with them to the new place, or leave the family at home, spend a lot of money for unexpected moving costs, face adaptation challenges and is exposed to possible social, psychological and cultural problems. All of this refers to work-life balance issues (balance between work and personal life)

Work-life balance within the non-homebase rotation, such as missing the family, the necessity for travelling home for family matters, decrease in financial saving due to transfer and travel costs and adaptation challenge that weakens employee work engagement. Employee's weakened work engagement is demonstrated in the decrease of positive attitude towards work, lower time availability for work, decline of organizational business context, lower personal motivation and development of a condition that others see as 'transactional engagement', namely an engagement which will only be observed under some 'requirements' made available by the employee. This weakened engagement leads to lower work performance as demonstrated by the lower employee's work quantity and quality and lower attendance at work.

The study confirms the study of Anitha (2014) which found that work-life balance is an increasingly crucial factor to employee engagement.²⁶ This is supported by Deery & Jago (2014) who have the view that work-life balance increases job satisfaction, organizational commitment and employee attitudes. Deery and Jago (2014) refers such weakened work engagement to 'emotional exhaustion' which results in relatively low work performance.

²⁶ Anitha, J. (2014). Determinants of employee engagement and their impact on employee performance. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 63(3), 308–323

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